

Strange and Terrible NEWS from

Alton in Hamp-Shire:

Being a Full and True Account of a

Dreadful Tempest

Which happened there by

THUNDER

AND

LIGHTNING,

December 19th 1686.

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*This may be Printed, Jan. 6. 1686. R. P.*

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L O N D O N,

Printed for S. M. and are to be Sold by *Randall Taylor*  
near *Stationers-Hall*, 1687.

and Terrible News from

Alton in Hampshire

Being a Full and True Account of a

Dreadful Tempest

which happened near by

THUNDER

AND

LIGHTNING

December 10th 1686

This may be Printed Jan. 2. 1686. R. P.

LONDON

Printed for J. M. and are to be sold by R. M. Taylor  
near Stationers-Hall, 1687

Strange and Terrible NEWS from

# Alton in Hamp-Shire,

Being a full and true Account of a

## Dreadful Tempest

Which happened by

## Thunder and Lightning,

December 19th. 1686.

**A**Mongst all those Varieties of Natural Accidents, that either cause our Fear or occasion our Amazement, there is certainly nothing that more contributes to both of them than Thunder and Lightning: In the rest of the methods that the Almighty pleases to evidence His Power to the World, there are more manifest signs of His mercy and mildness than His Anger and Displeasure, as the Reader may find in the following Relation.

On the Nineteenth of December, 1686: at Alton in Hampshire, there happened such a Tempest, that for the strangeness of its circumstances can scarce be paralleld in any History; whether we consider the violence of the Storm, or its duration, or the favourable Exit it made. On Sunday when the Reverend Minister of the Parish was towards the latter end of his Prayer before Sermon, it grew on a sudden so exceeding dark that the People could hardly discern one another, and immediately after happened such flashes of Lightning that the whole Church seemed to be in a bright Flame; the surprize of the Congregation was exceeding great, especially when two Balls of Fire that made their entry at the Eastern Wall, pass'd through the body of the Church, leaving behind em so great a Smoke; and smell of Brimstone, as is scarce able to be exprest. The People endeavour'd all they could to get out of the Church, and as it generally happens in such occasions, the Throng and Pressing at the Door was so great and tumultuous, that it was a considerable time before they got out; some of them fainted away in the Church, as namely the Clerk, who, when he came to himself, cry'd out, *Good People where be yee*; some swoounded in the Church-yard, and others in their own Houses, so great an impression had the Tempest made on them. In short, both within and without, the cry of Women and Children was exceeding affrightful; but to the everlasting remembrance of so strange an event, none were killed, *Lightning and Thunder cannot go a hairs breadth beyond the Almighty's Commission; Winds and Tempests fulfil His Word.*



Thus for the Relation of the Tempest in General ; come we now to the particular Damages it wrought: it broke a hole through the Tower about the bigness of a Cannon-Bullet-hole, and went away by the brim of the great Bell ; it melted above sixty foot of Wire, and passing down into the Clock-room, removed several Boards, and threw a Stone from off the top of a Pillar down among the People, making at the same time as great a noise as the largest Piece of Ordnance in England. It has shatter'd and broke the Windows all round the Church, and likewise a very substantial strong Door that goes into the Tower. Also it came in at a Door upon the Leads, shaking down a great part of the Wall, and setting ( as 'tis supposed ) the middle Loft on Fire, which by the timely care of the People was immediately quench'd and suppressed. The Weather-Cock was carried quite away, and the Hand and Boards belonging to the Clock fell among the Congregation. Several Houses in *Alton* were so extremely shook with the violence of the Storm, that the People ran out of Doors, fearing their Houses would fall upon their Heads. *William Hamman* a Shooe-maker had his Head broke, as likewise *Joseph Esments*. The Minister ( whose name is Mr. *Henry Butler*, and who justifies the truth of the whole Relation ) had his Eye-brows singed with the Lightning ; his Eyes were extremely sore by the burning that happened ; as several others of the Parish, that shared with him in this unfortunate Accident. The Wall behind the Pulpit has suffered much damages; the Steeple was set on Fire, which was soon extinguished by the industry of the Townsamen. To give you the words of a Gentleman that had the Curiosity to go and view the Ruins some few daies afterwards; *I never in my life (saies he) saw a Sight so dreadful and amazing; and found my self extremely concern'd to see the Walls (some whereof are six or eight Foot wide and square) shatter'd and rent after such a dismal manner; I touched the Wall about the Breach, and the Stones crumbled under my Fingers. The Thunder-Clap put the People in such a Consternation, that few of them were able to give a satisfactory account of the matter, &c.*

To conclude, as we have great reason to admire the infinite goodness and mercy of the Lord upon this occasion; ( not one single person being killed, tho some were wounded ) so we ought to apply the case home to our selves, and by a timely quitting our sinful courses, avert those Judgments that otherwise will unavoidably fall upon us. Some of our Neighbouring Nations ( as the *Gazette* has inform'd us ) have sufficiently smarted under Heavens displeasure. The better part of *Friezeland* lies covered with the Water: whole Villages and Towns swept away by the Deluge; and some part of the Castle of *St. Angelo* at *Rome* carried by the force of the Inundation. Let Atheists and Hypocrites beware in time, and return to the performance of those Duties, which they are obliged to do as men, and as Christians: For those that will not listen to the Voice of the Lord in His Scriptures, shall hear, against their wills, His Voice in Thunder; and those that are not to be reduced by the Almighty's Clemency, must be reclaimed by a Judgment.

Witnessed by

*William Hamman,*

*John Deane,*

*William Constance, Sexton.*

